of ithat reason arid wisdom, according to which it acts, nor does it properly intend those ends, which it acts for; nor, indeed, is it expressly conscious of what it doth, it not knowing, but only doing, according to commands and laws impressed upon it. Neither of which things ought to seen* strange or incredible, since nature may as well act regularly and artificially, without any knowledge and consciousness of its own, as forms of letters compounded together may print coherent philosophic sense, though they understand nothing at all ; and it may also act for the sake of those ends, that are not intended by itself, but some higher being, as well as the saw or hatchet in the hand of the architect or mechanic

Siraplic. in Arist. Phys.

TreA^/c^t, aAA · ro *GKtTrapyov* £ve/ca *rov* ov aXXa *rep* 7rpoXoyi£o/*£v&j VTrijpe-Vt* ^j^*

the axe cuts for the sake of something, though itself does not ratiocinate, nor intend nor design any thing, but is only subservient to that which does so. — It is true, that our human actions are not governed by such exact reason, art, and wisdom, nor carried on with such constancy, evenness, and uniformity, as the actions of nature are ; notwithstanding which, since we act according to a knowledge of our own, and are masters of that wisdom, by which our actions are directed, since we do not act fatally only, but electively and intendingly, with consciousness and self-perception, the rational life that is in us ought to be accounted a much higher and more noble perfection than, that plastic life of nature. Nay, this plastic nature is so far from being the first and highest life, that it is indeed the last and lowest of all lives, it being really the same thing with the